



RTCA in Connecticut

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. The National Park Service (NPS) staff provide technical assistance to community groups, city, county, tribal governments, and non-profit organizations working to enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation opportunities. We help local leaders plan and design trails and parks; conserve and improve access to natural areas; protect special places; and create recreation opportunities.

The RTCA program in Connecticut offers a wide range of services that can be tailored to meet the needs of an individual project. The NPS staff members are trained facilitators who encourage project leaders to build collaborative partnerships among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. The program helps communities and groups define their vision, goals, and objectives; analyze issues and opportunities; and develop strategic action plans and time lines for projects. We do not provide financial assistance, but can help project partners identify and secure sources of funding and technical support.

Any community with committed project partners can apply for assistance. Believing the best plans are completed locally, the National Park Service will work with partners to encourage broad-based community participation in planning, designing, and implementing the projects we support.

In 2016, the National Park Service in Connecticut will work on a variety of projects including:

- **Coltsville Pedestrian Connections** – The project goal is to support community involvement in streetscape improvements that will enhance the pedestrian experience of residents and visitors as the new national park is created. (Location: Hartford, Connecticut)
- **Groundwork Bridgeport** – The project goal is to implement environmental projects focusing on community and youth development and outdoor recreation. (Location: Bridgeport, Connecticut)
- **Naugatuck River Greenway** – The project goal is to create a 44-mile greenway trail from Torrington to Derby CT championed by an alliance of town and city staff and volunteers. Each partner will work on next steps to create, extend and promote the greenway where they live and work. (Location: Western Connecticut)
- **New England National Scenic Trail** – The project goal is to provide the highest quality trail experience for all users of the New England National Scenic Trail. (Location: Connecticut River Valley in Massachusetts and Connecticut)
- **Western New England Greenway** – The project goal is to establish a 3-state bike touring route from New York City to Montreal, Canada. (Location: New York City, New York to Montreal, Canada)
- **Winsted Trails** – The project goal is to create a vibrant, sustainable citizen's committee that works closely with city hall to make trail improvements for pedestrians and cyclists and to organize community events. (Location: Winsted, Connecticut)



Hikers walking through a portion of the Naugatuck River Greenway.

Recent Success Story

Trails as Places of Healing: A Sensory Walk on the New England Trail – In October 2015, artist Bibi Calderaro led a series of sensorial walks on the New England National Scenic Trail and at Weir Farm National Historic Site that explored

the human connection with place through an in-depth walking experience. Bibi uses a unique approach to bring awareness to one's surroundings and draw attention to the multiple ways one may connect with the land. Although aimed at enhancing the relationship between individuals and living landscapes, Bibi's approach allows for a wide range of possibilities and insights from being truly present.

For more information about the RTCA program refer to: www.nps.gov/rtca, or for information about ongoing or potential RTCA projects in Connecticut contact:

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